

PURE WATER OF GRACE.

Free for All Who Would Have
Eternal Life.

The Only Fountain That Can Slake the
Sinner's Thirst and Allay a Longing.
Weary Soul's Troubles—Talmage's Ser-
mon.

THE HAMPTONS, Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, D. D., pastor at the Brooklyn Tabernacle, continues to enjoy the summer in this pleasant place. His sermon for to-day was on the text: "We can not, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep."—Genesis xxix., 8. A scene in Mesopotamia, beautifully pastoral. A well of water of great value in that region. The fields around about in white with three flocks of sheep lying down waiting for the watering. I hear their bleating coming on the bright air, and the laughter of young men and maidens indulging in rustic repartee. I look off and I see other flocks of sheep coming. Meanwhile Jacob, a stranger, on the interesting errand of looking for a wife, comes to the well. A beautiful shepherdess comes to the same well. I see her approaching, followed by her father's flock of sheep. It was a memorable meeting. Jacob married that shepherdess. The Bible account of it is: "Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept." It has always been a mystery to me what he found to cry about. But before that scene occurred Jacob accosts the shepherds and asks them why they postpone the slaking of the thirst of these sheep, and why they did not immediately proceed to water them. The shepherds reply to the effect: "We are all good neighbors, and as a matter of courtesy we wait until all the sheep of the neighborhood come up. Besides that, this stone on the well's mouth is somewhat heavy, and several of us take hold of it and push it aside, and then the buckets and the troughs are filled, and the sheep are satisfied. 'We can not, until all the flocks are gathered together and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep.'"

Oh, this is a thirsty world! Hot for the head, and blistering for the feet, and parching for the tongue.

The world's great want is a cool, refreshing, satisfying draught. We wander around and find the cistern empty. Long and tedious drought has dried up the world's fountains, but nearly nineteen centuries ago a Shepherd, with a crook in the shape of a cross, and feet out to bleeding, explored the desert passages of this world, and one day came across a well a thousand feet deep, bubbling and bright and opalescent, and looked to the north and the south and the east and west, and cried out with a voice strong and musical that rang through the ages: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!"

Now a great flock of sheep to-day gather around this Gospel well. There are a great many thirsty souls. I wonder why the flocks of all nations do not gather—why so many stay thirsty; and while I am wondering about it my text breaks forth in the explanation saying: "We can not, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep."

If a herd of swine come to a well they angrily jostle each other for the precedence; if a drove of cattle come to a well they hook each other back from the water but when a flock of sheep come, though a hundred of them shall be disappointed, they only express it by sad bleating; they come together peacefully. We want a great multitude to come around the Gospel well. I know there are those who do not like a crowd—they think a crowd is vulgar. If they are oppressed for room in church it makes them possibly impatient and belligerent. We have had people permanently leave our church because so many other people come to it. Not so did these Oriental shepherds. They waited until all the flocks were gathered, and the more flocks that came the better they liked it. And so we ought to be anxious that all the people should come. Go out into the highways and the hedges and compel them to come in. Go to the rich and tell them they are indigent without the Gospel of Jesus. Go to the poor and tell them the affluence there is in Christ. Go to the blind and tell them of the touch that gives eternal illumination. Go to the lame and tell them of the joy that will make the lame man leap like a hart. Gather all the sheep off of all the mountains. None so torn of the dogs, none so sick, none so worried, none so dying as to be omitted. Why not gather a great flock! All Brooklyn is a flock; all New York is a flock; all London is a flock; all the world is a flock. This well of the Gospel is deep enough to put out the burning thirst of the twelve hundred million of the race. Do not let the Church, by a spirit of exclusiveness, keep the world out. Let down all the bars, swing open all the gates, scatter all the invitations: "Whosoever will, let him come." Come, white and black. Come, red men of the forest. Come, Laplander, out of the snow. Come, Patagonian, out of the heat. Come in furs. Come panting under palm leaves. Come one. Come all. Come now. As at this well of Mesopotamia Jacob and Rachel were betrothed, so this morning at this well of salvation, Christ our Shepherd will meet you coming up with your long flocks of cares and anxieties, and He will stretch out His hand in pledge of His affection, while all Heaven will cry out: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him."

You notice that this well of Mesopotamia had a stone on it, which must be removed before the sheep could be watered; and I find on the well of salvation to-day impediment and obstacles which must be removed in order that you may obtain the refreshment and life of this Gospel. In your case the impediment is pride of heart. You can not bear to come to so democratic a fountain; you do not want to come with so many others. It is to you like when you

are dry coming to a town pump, as compared sitting in a parlor sipping out of a silver salver. Not so many publicans and sinners. You want to get to Heaven, but it must be in a special car, with your feet on a Turkish ottoman and a band of music on board the train. You do not want to be in company with rustic Jacob and Rachel, and to be drinking out of the fountain where ten thousand sheep have been drinking before you. You will have to remove the obstacles of pride, or never find your way to the well. You will have to come as we came, willing to take the water of eternal life in any way, and at any hand, and in any kind of a pitcher, crying out: "Oh, Lord Jesus, I am dying of thirst. Give me the water of eternal life, whether in trough or goblet; give me the water of life; I care not in what it comes to me." Away with all hindrances of pride from the well's mouth.

Here is another man who is kept back from this water of life by the stone of an obdurate heart, which lies over the mouth of the well. You have no more feeling on this subject than if God had yet to do you the first kindness, or you had to do God the first wrong. Seated on his lap all these years, His everlasting arms sheltering you, where is your gratitude? Where is your morning and evening prayer? Where are your consecrated lives? I say to you as Daniel said to Belshazzar: "The God in whose hand thy breath is, and all thy way, thou hast not glorified." If you treated any body as bad as you have treated God you would have made five hundred apologies—yes, your whole life would have been an apology. Three times a day you have been seated at God's table. Spring, summer, autumn and winter He has appropriately appeared you. Your health from Him; your companion from Him; your children from Him; your home from Him: all the bright surroundings of your life through Him. O, man, what dost thou with that hard heart! Canst thou not feel one throb of gratitude toward the God that made you, and the Christ who came to redeem you, and the Holy Ghost who has been all these years importuning you? If you will sit down five minutes under the tree of a Saviour's martyrdom and feel His warm life trickling on your forehead and cheek and hands, methinks you would get some appreciation of what you owe to a crucified Jesus.

"Heart of stone, relent, relent,
Touched by Jesus' cross subdued;
See his body, mangled, rent,
Covered with a gore of blood.
Sinful soul, what hast thou done?
Crucified the eternal Son."

Jacob, with a good deal of tug and push, took the stone from the well's mouth, so that the flocks might be watered. And I would that this morning my word, by the blessing of God, might remember the hindrances to your getting up to the Gospel well. Yea, I take it for granted that the work is done, and now, like Oriental shepherds, I proceed to water the sheep.

Come, all ye thirsty! You have an undefined longing in your soul. You tried money-making; that did not satisfy you. You tried office under Government; that did not satisfy you. You tried pictures and sculptures; but works of art did not satisfy you. You are as much discontented with this life as the celebrated French author, who felt that he could not any longer endure the misfortunes of the world, and who said: "At four o'clock this afternoon I shall put an end to my own existence. Meanwhile, I must toil on up to that time for the sustenance of my family. And he wrote on his book until the clock struck four, when he folded up his manuscript and, by his own hand, concluded his earthly life. There are men in this house who are perfectly discontented. Unhappy in the past, unhappy to-day, to be unhappy forever, unless you come to this Gospel well. It satisfies the soul with a high, deep, all-absorbing and eternal satisfaction. It comes, and it offers the most unfortunate man so much of this world as is best for him, and throws all Heaven into the bargain. The wealth of Croesus, and of all the Stewarts, and all the Barings, and all the Rothschilds is only a poor, miserable shilling compared with the eternal fortunes that Christ offers you to-day. In the far East there was a King who used once a year to get on a scales, while on the other side of the scales were placed gold, and silver, and gems; indeed, enough were placed there to balance the King; then, at the close of the weighing, all those treasures were thrown among the populace. But Christ to-day steps on one side the scales, and on the other side are all the treasures of the universe, and He says: "All are yours—all height, all depth, all length, all breadth, all eternity; all are yours." We don't appreciate the promises of the Gospel. When an aged clergyman was dying—a man very eminent in the Church—a young theological student stood by his side, and the aged man looked up and said to him: "Can't you give me some comfort in my dying hour?" "No," said the young man; "I can't talk to you on this subject; you know all about it, and have known it so long." "Well," said the dying man, "just recite to me some promises." The young man thought a moment, and he came to this promise: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin;" and the old man clasped his hands, and in his dying moment said: "That's just the promise I have been waiting for. 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.' Oh, the warmth, the grandeur, the magnificence of the promises!"

Come, also, to this Gospel well, all ye troubled. I do not suppose you have escaped. Compare your view of this life at fifteen years of age with what your view of it is at forty, or sixty, or seventy. What a great contrast of opinion! Were you right then, or are you right now? Two cups placed in your hands, the one a sweet cup, the other a sour cup. A cup of joy and a cup of grief. Which has been the nearest to being full, and out of which have you the more frequently partaken? What a different place Greenwood is from what it used to be! Once it was to you a grand city improvement, and you went out

on the pleasure excursion, and you ran laughingly up the mound, and you criticised in a light way the epitaph. But since the day when you heard the bell toll at the gate when you went in with the procession it is a sad place, and there is a flood of rushing memories that suffuse the eye and overmaster the heart. Oh, you have had trouble, trouble, trouble. God only knows how much you have had. It is a wonder you have been able to live through it. It is a wonder your nervous system has not been shattered, and your brain has not reeled. Trouble, trouble. If I could gather all the griefs, of all sorts, from this great audience, and could put them in one scroll, neither man nor angel could endure the recitation. Well, what do you want? Would you like to have your property back again? "No," you say, as a Christian man, "I was becoming arrogant, and I think that is why the Lord took it away. I don't want to have my property back." Well, would you have your departed friends back again? "No," you say, "I couldn't take the responsibility of bringing them from a tearless realm to a realm of tears. I couldn't do it." Well, then, what do you want? A thousand voices in the audience cry out: "Comfort, give us comfort." For that reason I have rolled away the stone from the well's mouth. Come, all ye wounded of the flock, pursued by the Lord's sick and bereft ones have come.

"Ah," says some one, "you are not old enough to understand my sorrows. You have not been in the world as long as I have, and you can't talk to me about my misfortunes in the time of old age." Well, I may not have lived as long as you, but I have been a great deal among old people, and I know how they feel about their failing health, and about their departed friends, and about the loneliness that sometimes strikes through their souls. After two persons have lived together for forty or fifty years, and one of them is taken away, what desolation! I shall not forget the cry of the late Rev. Dr. De Witt, of New York, when he stood by the open grave of his beloved wife, and, after the obsequies had ended, he looked down into the open place and said: "Farewell, my honored, faithful and beloved wife. The bond that bound us is severed. Thou art in glory, and I am here on earth. We shall meet again. Farewell! Farewell!" To lean on a prop for fifty years, and then have it break under you! There were only two years' difference between the death of my father and mother. After my mother's decease my father used to go around as though looking for something. He would often get up from one room, without any seeming reason, and go to another room, and then he would take his cane and start out, and some one would say: "Father, where are you going?" and he would answer: "I don't know exactly where I am going." Always looking for something. Though he was a tender-hearted man, I never saw him cry but once, and that was at the burial of my mother. After sixty years' living together it was hard to part. And there are aged people to-day who are feeling just such a pang as that. I want to tell them there is perfect enchantment in the promises of this Gospel; and I come to them and offer them my arm, or I take their arm and I bring them to this

Gospel well. Sit down, father or mother, sit down. See if there is any thing at the well for you. Come, David, the Psalmist, have you any thing encouraging to offer them? "Yes," says the Psalmist, "they shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing, to show that the Lord is upright. He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in me." Come, Isaiah, have you any thing to say out of your prophecies for these aged people? "Yes," says Isaiah; "Down to old age I am with thee, and to hoary hairs will I carry thee." Well, if the Lord is going to carry you, you ought not to worry much about your failing eyesight and failing limbs. You get a little worried for fear some time you will come to want, do you? Your children and grandchildren sometimes speak a little sharp at you because of your ailments. The Lord will not speak sharp. Do you think you will come to want? Who do you think the Lord is? Are His granaries empty? Will He feed the raven, and the rabbit, and the lion in the desert, and forget you? Why, naturalists tell us that the porpoise will not forget its wounded and sick mate. And do you suppose the Lord of Heaven and earth has not as much sympathy as the fish of the sea? But you say: "I am so near worn out, and I am of no use to God any more." I think the Lord knows whether you are of any more use or not; if you were of no more use he would have taken you before this. Do you think God has forgotten you because He has taken care of you seventy or eighty years? He thinks more of you to-day than He ever did, because you think more of Him. May the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Paul the aged be your God forever.

But I gather all the promises to-day in a group, and I ask the shepherds to drive their flocks of lambs and sheep up to the sparkling supply. "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth." "Though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion." "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." I am determined this morning that no one shall go out of this house uncomfited. Yonder is a timid and shrinking soul who seems to hide away from the consolations I am uttering, as a child with a sore hand hides away from the physician lest he touch the wound too roughly, and the mother has to go and compel the little patient to come out and see the physician. No, I come to your timid and shrinking soul to-day, and compel you to come out in the presence of the Divine Physician. He will not hurt you. He has been healing wounds for many years, and he will give you gentle and omnipotent medication. But people, when they have trouble, go any where rather than to God. Dequency took

opium to get rid of his troubles. Charles Lamb took to punch. Theodore Hook took to something stronger. Edwin Forrest took to theatrical dissipation. And men have run all around the earth, hoping in the quick transit to get away from their misfortunes. It has been a dead failure. There is only one well that can slake the thirst of an afflicted spirit, and that is the deep and inexhaustible well of the Gospel.

But some one says to the audience: Notwithstanding all you have said this morning I find no alleviation for my troubles." Well, I am not through yet. I have left the most potent consideration for the last. I am going to soothe you with the thought of Heaven. However talkative we may be, there will come a time when the stoutest and most emphatic interrogation will evoke from us no answer. As soon as we have closed our lips for the final silence no power on earth can break that taciturnity. But where, oh Christian, will be your spirit? In a scene of infinite gladness. The spring morning of Heaven waving its blossoms in the bright air. Victors fresh from battle showing their scars. The rain of earthly sorrow struck through with the rainbow of eternal joy. In one group God and angels and the redeemed—Paul and Silas, Latimer and Ridley, Isaiah and Jeremiah, Payson and John Milton, Gabriel and Michael, the archangel. Long line of choristers reaching across the hills. Seas of joy dashing to the white beach. Conquerors marching from gate to gate. You among them.

Oh, what a great flock of sheep God will gather around the celestial well. No stone on the well's mouth while the Shepherd waters the sheep. There Jacob will recognize Rachel, the shepherdess. And standing on one side of the well of eternal rapture, your children; and standing on the other side of eternal rapture, your Christian ancestry, you will be bounded on all sides by a joy so keen and grand that no other world has ever been even permitted to experience it. Out of that one deep well of Heaven, the Shepherd will dip reunion for the bereaved, wealth for the poor, health for the sick, rest for the weary. And then all the flock of the Lord's sheep will lie down in the green pastures, and world without end will praise the Lord that on this summer Sabbath morning we were permitted to study the story of Jacob and Rachel, the shepherdess at the well in Mesopotamia.

AGREEABLE PEOPLE.

Men and Women Who Are Welcome
Guests in Every Circle.

We all mean to be agreeable, but most of us do not get any further than the intention. Some people are naturally of amiable dispositions, and it comes very easy for them to be agreeable, but the majority have not dispositions of this kind, and to these people it is somewhat more difficult. Agreeable people are always very pleasant people to meet. We always feel at our ease with them. We haven't the least fear of their commenting on every slight mistake that we may make. They are always a welcome addition to any assembly, and their company is always in great demand. We never hesitate to ask a favor from them, for we are confident that, if in their power, they will certainly grant it. It may be at a great deal of inconvenience to themselves, but that doesn't matter, for such people very rarely think of self. Their thoughtfulness for others and their forgetfulness of self are their chief charms. They are always studying every body's comfort, and are ready at any moment to do just what a person most wants done. These people are never flatterers. We would very soon weary of them if they were, for an incessant flatterer is of all things the most wearisome. Nor do they tell us disagreeable truths under the guise of being called honest.

"Oh," says some of these would-be honest people, "I always say what I think; I am perfectly outspoken; I don't believe in thinking one thing and saying another; I believe in being honest." It never occurs to them that what they term honesty may appear, and very often is, downright rudeness. They really haven't the least intention of being rude; they generally mean well and believe they are honest in saying just what they think. They have not the least idea that they annoy anybody by their seeming honesty. They are, as a rule, thoughtless people, who believe that if they are not outspoken, they may be called deceitful, which, to be sure, they never are. Whatever else these people may be they are not hypocrites in any sense of the word; they are very good people in their way, nevertheless they are seldom agreeable. When they attend a gathering at the house of a friend, they are very apt to speak right out whatever is in their minds, and frequently offend some one by their thoughtlessness. The hostess is seldom at ease while a guest of this kind is in the house. She is always afraid of something unpleasant happening.

Frequently a woman says: "I do like Mrs. B— she is so outspoken; I shouldn't have dared to say what she did to Mrs. K., yet I'm glad somebody told her her own; it was the truth, anyhow." She cultivates Mrs. B— as an acquaintance, and in a very short while is treated to a dose of the same kind of medicine as that administered to Mrs. K—. She very soon comes to the conclusion that Mrs. B— is not as pleasant a companion as she could wish, and it does not take a long time to convince her that outspoken people are not always the most agreeable ones.

Agreeable people are not as plentiful as they should be, and the more we have of them the better. They are always the right people in the right place. Always ready and willing to help any and every body that desires their aid. Thoroughly unselfish, their whole thought appears to be for the comfort of others.—*Boston Budget.*

Don't think that the world is coming to an end because somebody you believed in has talked or acted foolishly. There is nothing so solid in this world as simple truth. Men may wreck themselves in this way, but the truth is as strong as its Author. Discouragement is another name for Doubt.—*Christian Advocate.*

When a young woman behaves to her parents in a manner particularly tender and respectful—I mean from principle as well as nature—there is nothing good and gentle that may not be expected from her, in whatever condition she is placed.—*Fordyce.*

PERSONAL AND LITERARY.

—Mrs. Ellen Wood, the authoress, left personal estate to the value of £36,000. In her case novel writing paid.

—George R. Sims is said to have contributed to the columns of almost every important periodical in England.

—Audubon's original and finely hand-colored illustrated work sold in folio at one thousand dollars a volume, and is now rare and valuable.

—A fresh manuscript of the "Imitation of Christ" has been found in the Cologne City Library. It is a Low German translation in verse—the oldest translation of the book yet known, and gives the date 1434 as the origin of the "Imitation."

—Louis XIV., traveling, met a priest riding in great haste. Ordering him to stop, the King excitedly inquired: "Whence? whither? for what?" He answered: "Burgos—Paris—a benefice." "You shall have it," said the monarch, delighted with his conciseness.

—General Sherman told the cadets, at West Point that advice is the cheapest thing going, and that there was something of the humorous in seeing sixty-four young men about to enter life thinking that they knew all things. "But there are many lessons taught here of which the world hears nothing. 'Erect! Silence!'—these are the lessons that are never taught in our universities."—*Harper's Weekly.*

—In Paris, Oxford County, Me., is a copy of the will of Artemus Ward. Paris is the birthplace of Hannibal Hamlin. Artemus Ward was a compositor on the county paper, the Oxford Observer. His will directed that his body be buried at Waterford, about ten miles from Paris. After making a few bequests he gave the balance of his property to found a home for worn-out printers, Horace Greeley to be sole trustee. As there was no balance the home was never established.

—Charles II. asked Bishop Stillingfleet how it happened that he preached in general without notes, but always read the sermons he delivered before the court. The Bishop replied that the awe of seeing before him so great and wise a Prince made him afraid to trust himself. "But will your Majesty," continued he, "permit me to ask you a question? Why do you read your speeches to Parliament?" "Why, doctor, I'll tell you very candidly. I have asked them so often for money that I'm ashamed to look them in the face."—*Drake's Travellers' Magazine.*

HUMOROUS.

—Summer Boarder—"I have heard that silk tassels grow on your corn?" Farmer—"Yes, Miss; regular gros-grain silk it is, too."—*Lowell Citizen.*

—Charlie—"Mamma, how long is Aunt Adelaide going to visit us?" Mamma—"I don't know, my son; as long as she chooses, of course." Charlie—"Well, won't we get very tired?"—*Harper's Bazar.*

—Take a Good Deal Less.—"Look at this watch for twenty dollars!" The placard in the window read. A tramp stared in and said: "A funny offer! Why, sakes alive, I'll look at it all day for five!"—*Harper's Bazar.*

—"Do you call this a band of picked musicians?" said a hotel manager to the leader of a summer band. "Ach! dot vos so, I bick 'em mineself," replied the bandmaster. "Well, then, you picked them before they were ripe."—*Christian Union.*

—Mrs. Dashaway—"I am to be married to-morrow evening, and I want a floral bell to hang in the drawing-room. Make it just like the two you sent me for as many previous weddings." Florist—"How would a chestnut bell in tea roses answer?"—*Texas Siftings.*

—Lady Patient—"I've got a terribly tired feeling, doctor." Doctor—"Put out your tongue." Lady's Husband—"Oh, it ain't her tongue that's tired, doctor." Doctor (sternly)—"Sir, your information is superfluous; I am a married man myself."—*Burlington Hawk-eye.*

—A Misunderstanding—"I say, stranger," whispered a Western man, who had strayed in an up-town theater where the play of "Romeo and Juliet" was going on. "I can't make head nor tail of this thing. What's the name of the play, anyhow?" "Romeo and Juliet." "Well, if I'd known that," said the disgusted Westerner, "I wouldn't have come in. I understood the feller at the door to say it was something about Omaha and Juliet."—*Life.*

—Henry (softly)—"Florence, do you think you could leave your happy home and loving friends and go into the far West with a worthy young man who has no wealth save his profession? (A pause.) I'm waiting, Florrie." Florence (tenderly)—"Yes, Henry, I think I could." Henry, (with a sigh of relief)—"Well, I'm right glad to hear you say that. You see my friend Joe is going West, and wants to marry, so I'll just mention your case to him."—*Life.*